

Join 'Militant' renewal drive, help expand paper's reach

BY SETH GALINSKY

Socialist Workers Party members and other readers of the *Militant* are not waiting for the Jan. 1 start of the international campaign to win renewals to the working-class paper and to get back in touch with new subscribers.

A team in New York City headed to a Brooklyn neighborhood Dec. 12 to visit three recent subscribers. They also planned to introduce other workers there to the *Militant*, books by revolutionary leaders and the program of the Socialist Workers Party.

They never got past the first door. "Hamin Sialana, a retired merchant seaman originally from the Maluku Islands who had just sent in a contribution to the Militant Prisoners Fund, invited us all in for tea," reports Sarah Katz. "We talked for well over an hour."

"He told us he had gone to Indonesia as a youth and was there in 1965 when army generals carried out a coup, massacring hundreds of thousands of working people, students and Communist

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Build solidarity with the Kellogg, miners strikes!



Militant/Bob Braxton

Warrior Met Coal strike support rally in Brookwood, Alabama, Dec. 8. Court injunction blocking union from mass picketing at mine entrances is serious attack on whole labor movement.

Miners: 'We have been on strike for 252 days now'

BY JOHN BENSON

BROOKWOOD, Ala. — "We have been on strike now for 252 days," United Mine Workers of America President Cecil Roberts told some 200 miners, family members, retired miners and other sup-

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Kellogg's strikers say No! to two-tier wages, benefits

BY AMY HUSK

The 1,400 members of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers union continue to stand strong on the picket lines following their overwhelming rejection of a new contract offer by Kellogg's bosses that would have divided and weakened the union. BCTGM members have been on strike against Kellogg's in Battle Creek, Michigan; Omaha, Nebraska; Memphis, Tennessee; and Lancaster, Pennsylvania, since Oct. 5.

"I was happy we turned down the company's latest offer," Christopher Hebner, a member of Local 3G in Bat-

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Social disaster after tornadoes result of bosses drive for profits

BY MAGGIE TROWE

Powerful tornadoes swept across six states Dec. 10, resulting in a death toll climbing to over 100 people, including factory workers left to fend for themselves on the job in Kentucky and Illinois. While the storms were a mighty reflection of the power of nature, much of the death and destruction was a result of decisions made by profit-driven capitalist bosses and disdain for working people by governments at all levels. Thousands have been left homeless and tens of thousands without power in winter.

The storm system wreaked havoc in Kentucky, Arkansas, Illinois, Missouri, Mississippi and Tennessee, shattering and flattening buildings large and small, tossing cars through the air and derailing 28 CSX train cars in Earlington, Kentucky.

The National Weather Service office in Paducah, Kentucky, reported Dec. 11 that aerial photos of the damage indicated a "historic long-track tornado" at least three-quarters of a mile wide with estimated wind speeds up to 200 mph.

This natural disaster has become a social catastrophe for working people. The lack of preparation for protection against the deadly ravage of tornados, high winds and rain and for shelter when storms are known to be coming, as well as for relief efforts, leave working people to fend for ourselves and then

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A working-class course is needed to support our families, women's rights



Topeka Frito-Lay Union Members Appreciation Page

July Frito-Lay strike picket in Topeka, Kansas. Key issue was stopping forced overtime, expanding family time. Women's participation in working class strengthens unions, women's rights.

BY TERRY EVANS

Two cases before the U.S. Supreme Court — one filed by the government of Mississippi, the other in Texas — are aimed at dismantling the court's 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision that decriminalized abortion nationwide.

That decision, however, also opened the door for an offensive against women and the working class. The Supreme Court majority based their ruling on arbitrary and shifting medical criteria, not women's constitutional right to equal

protection under the law. This was used by the capitalist rulers to cut short debate and curb growing support for a woman's

WOMEN AND THE CUBAN REVOLUTION — see page 7

control over the decision to give birth, free from government interference over that private and personal matter.

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Quebec forum discusses Burkina Faso Revolution, Thomas Sankara

BY JOE YOUNG

MONTREAL — Thomas Sankara was the central leader of the 1983-87 revolution in the West African country of Burkina Faso, Michel Prairie, the editor of *Thomas Sankara Speaks* and a leader of the Communist League, told 25 people at a Nov. 27 meeting here to discuss the book, Sankara's legacy and the Burkinabe Revolution.

"The revolution took place in one of the poorest countries in the world, an overwhelmingly agricultural country with a tiny industrial working class," Prairie said. Upper Volta, as the country was called then, was a former French colony still very much dominated and exploited by French imperialism.

In August 1983, after months of popular unrest, an uprising brought a revolutionary government to power, with Sankara at its head.

In the following four years, Prairie explained, "Sankara led the revolutionary government in mobilizing working

people to improve their conditions."

The event was organized in a partnership of Pathfinder Books and the Racines bookstore, and took place while the Montreal Book Fair was on. Panelists included Prairie, Tidiane Diallo, a

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Montreal day care workers end strike, gain wage increase

Warehouse workers in Australia win contract fights

Burkina Faso, Sankara forum

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refugee-rights activist from Guinea; and Emmanuel Adigun, who read a statement from Kenneth Adetola, a West African political refugee scheduled to speak but too ill to attend.

Published in 1988 in English and 2007 in French by Pathfinder Press, the book contains 30 speeches and interviews given by Sankara.

After the revolution came to power in a country facing hunger and ongoing encroachment of the Sahel desert, Sankara led workers and peasants to come together, Prairie said. They mobilized to build dams, irrigate valleys, plant trees and increase the production and distribution of food.

The revolutionary government organized massive literacy and immunization drives, he said. It nationalized the land and mobilized peasants to confront centuries-old exploitative relations in the countryside.

Sankara also took demonstrative steps toward involving women in the revolution and educating working people on the need to combat women's oppression. One key speech in the book is "The Revolution Cannot Triumph Without the Emancipation of Women."

"Sankara was an internationalist," Prairie said. The Burkina Faso Revolution fought imperialist domination and extended solidarity to other peoples fighting for their rights.

"What distinguishes Sankara among other revolutionaries who led courageous struggles against colonial and imperialist domination in Africa," he added, "is that he was a revolutionary Marxist, a communist. He had total confidence in the capacity of workers and peasants to transform their lives and

become new human beings with new proletarian values in the process.

"It is not an accident that the revolution forged links with the Cuban Revolution, and that Cuba sent 450 volunteers to help.

"Sankara explained," said Prairie, "that the revolution in Burkina Faso was a popular and democratic one. Its task was not to expropriate the capitalists and open the road to socialism. The country was too underdeveloped economically and socially. The revolution's task was to mobilize working people in solving their most immediate needs and, in so doing, create the conditions for the development of the country's economy and of a modern working class.

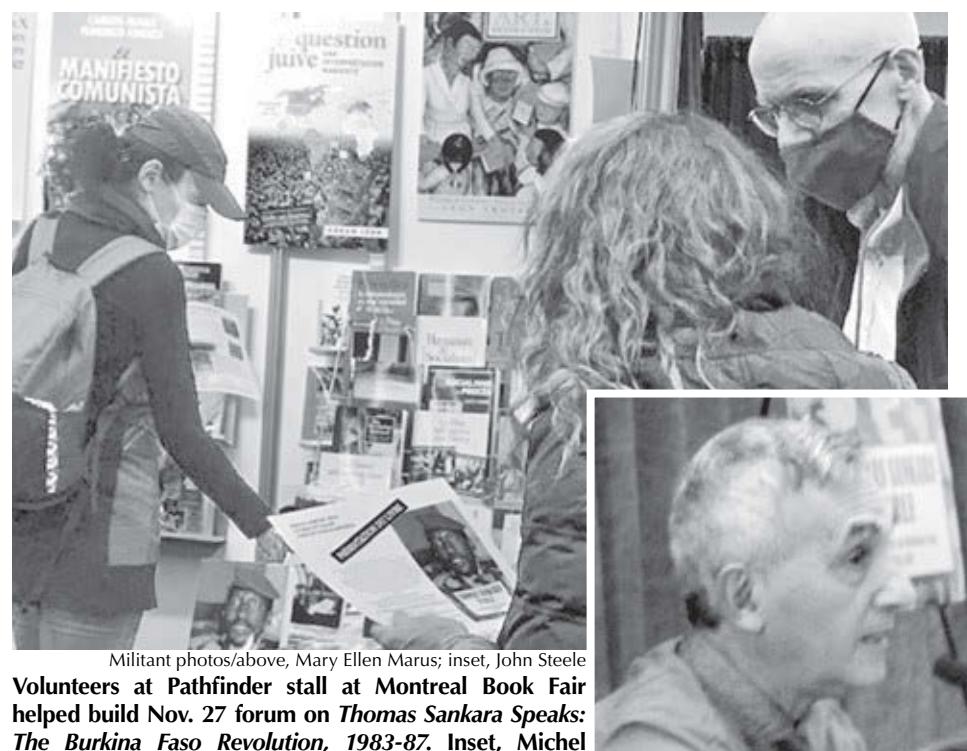
"Sankara fought till his last day to press this revolutionary course, whatever the obstacles," Prairie said.

Learned of Sankara from book'

"I was born two years after Sankara was killed," Diallo told the meeting. "I really learned about him when I read Pathfinder's collection of his speeches after coming to Canada as a political refugee."

"Sankara explained the fight for the trees and the forests is an anti-imperialist struggle because the imperialism is the arsonist of our forests and our plains," he said. "Comrade Sankara also understood that within Burkinabe society there was a certain exploitation of one layer by another, the exploitation of women by men."

"I was struck how as a child, Sankara said he used to spend his days playing outdoors with other boys while his young sisters had to stay home helping their mother do the chores," he said. "This was something the Burkina



Militant photos/above, Mary Ellen Marus; inset, John Steele
Volunteers at Pathfinder stall at Montreal Book Fair helped build Nov. 27 forum on *Thomas Sankara Speaks: The Burkina Faso Revolution, 1983-87*. Inset, Michel Prairie, editor of book, speaking on Burkinabé revolution.

Faso Revolution addressed, organizing days when men had to go to the market in order to buy food for the family.

"Sankara said that the revolution needs a convinced, not a conquered people," Diallo said. "There were some in the government who wanted to utilize force against the people, but comrade Sankara stressed the need for pedagogy."

Adetola's statement explained he was a student in Nigeria at the time of the Burkina Faso Revolution. "The accomplishments in the health sector under the Thomas Sankara-led government," he said, "are impressive, giant strides that saw vaccination in just two weeks of over 2.5 million children."

"When he came to power, the literacy level in Burkina Faso was only 12%. By dint of hard work and determination, his government drove the level up to 22% in just under two years," Adetola wrote. "You will notice his passion and zeal not only to educate the mind of his people, but also educate their hearts and rescue their consciousness from mental slavery."

A revolution overthrown

In the discussion Prairie addressed Sankara's fight in the last months of the revolution to build a revolutionary party, a party "that could regroup the best and most devoted fighters in order to lead the revolution forward, those involved with the peasants growing

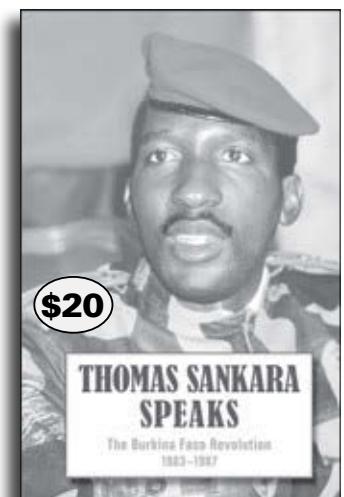
food and planting trees, not giving orders from an air-conditioned office in the capital city Ouagadougou."

There was no such party in Burkina Faso that united all revolutionaries in its ranks. Many of those who agreed with Sankara's course were either killed in the coup that overthrew the revolutionary government or broken by the decadeslong brutal repression under Blaise Compaore that followed.

Peter Thierjung, from the Socialist Workers Party in the U.S. who attended the meeting, took part in the discussion, addressing the current trial in Burkina Faso of 14 individuals, including Compaore, who are charged with being involved in the assassination of Sankara.

"For four years imperialism was unsuccessful in toppling the revolution

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THE MILITANT

Montgomery bus boycott dealt blow to Jim Crow

The 'Militant' covered the mass protests by the Black-led proletarian movement that overturned Jim Crow segregation. Today the paper keeps this history alive, and the truth about how these struggles advanced the unity and fighting capacity of the working class.



AP photo/Gene Herrick

E.D. Nixon, Rosa Parks, leaders of Montgomery bus boycott, in court in March 1956.

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Join 'Militant' renewal drive

Continued from front page

Party members," Katz said. "Sialana later became a merchant mariner and a backer of the seamen's union."

He renewed his subscription to the *Militant* and bought a copy of *Teamster Rebellion* by Farrell Dobbs, which tells the story of how the Teamsters in the Midwest were transformed into a fighting union that organized hundreds of thousands of workers in the 1930s. "Sometimes when I get a little extra money, I like sending a contribution to help your work," Sialana said.

"Until I read the *Militant*, I knew very little about the Cuban Revolution," Brendan Rains told this worker-correspondent when I phoned him earlier in the week. "I had no idea Cuba was sending doctors all over the world to aid in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic."

Rains, a student at New York University, subscribed at an Oct. 2 march in defense of a woman's right to choose abortion. When we met for coffee Dec. 14, he told me that at the Catholic high school he attended in Michigan, "they would make us go to right-to-life actions, but I was always curious about the other side of the debate."

He had been planning to visit the hunger strike outside City Hall by Yellow Cab taxi drivers, demanding debt relief, after they were bamboozled into buying city-issued medallions that then plummeted in value. "But then I saw in the *Militant* that the hunger strike was over, I thought I'd missed it," Rains said. "But I headed over and was able to be at their victory celebration."

The photography student is no fan of growing assaults on free speech rights on campus. "Sometimes you have to be very careful what you say because of how some people react," he added. "It's crazy."

"We need more debate, more discussion," I said. "The attempt to shut down opposing views in the name of 'political correctness' is dangerous for the working class. Anti-working-class views, wherever they come from, are always present under capitalism. They have to be answered."

Rains renewed his subscription and bought two books by Socialist Workers Party National Secretary Jack Barnes: *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* and *Are They Rich Because They're Smart? Class, Privilege, and Learning Under Capitalism*.

"I keep reading about how other sub-

Sankara forum

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from the outside because of Sankara's leadership," Thierjung said. "The counterrevolution came from inside, led by Compaore and his cronies who claimed to be revolutionaries but were not. They used thuggery, torture and murder to take power."

"Sankara's political course and example are indispensable for working people in North America and other countries to read and study," he said.

Maya Berger, a University of Montreal student, was one of three participants who had learned of the meeting from the Pathfinder Books booth at the Montreal Book Fair. In her opinion, the meeting and discussion, "clearly encouraged me that there are answers for workers' struggles and liberation struggles today."

scribers have been getting *Are They Rich Because They're Smart?*" Rain said. "I really want to read that book."

In it, Barnes takes apart the self-serving rationalizations of a layer of well-paid professionals that their schooling and "brightness" entitle them to "regulate" the lives of working people whose capacities and worth they completely overlook.

SWP members in New York City are mapping out plans to contact more new subscribers to ask if they want to get together to talk, join us in bringing solidarity to strike picket lines, attend the weekly *Militant* Labor Forum, as well as renew their subscription and get books on working-class politics. This work aims to help readers see the *Militant* as their paper, encourage them to introduce it to others and learn more about building the working-class movement.

Partisans of the *Militant* are also off to a good start in Montreal. Philippe Tessier from the Communist League had dinner with train conductor and Teamsters member Jonathan Chiasson to discuss building solidarity with day care workers on strike and other labor battles.

Chiasson has been following the *Militant*'s defense of rights, like due process and the stakes for the working class in the recent court ruling finding Kyle Rittenhouse "not guilty" in Kenosha,



Militant/Dan Fein
SWP member Leroy Watson, left, talking with Dwayne Houston in Bellwood, Illinois, about the Kellogg's strike, importance of workers' struggles. "I support the unions," Houston said.

Wisconsin. "The paper shows you the news you will not see on the big media," Chiasson said.

While getting in touch with readers, supporters of the paper continue to reach out to win new subscribers.

Dan Fein and Leroy Watson campaigned in Bellwood, Illinois, Dec. 12 where they knocked on the door of Dwayne Houston, a worker at Dr. Pepper. They told him about the strike by workers at Kellogg's to eliminate the two-tier wage setup.

"I support the unions," Houston said. "Where I work, we won the vote for the Teamsters before the pandemic hit, but the company has been stalling negotiations for a contract."

"I think I'll like this paper," he said as he subscribed.

Want to help introduce friends, co-workers, neighbors and relatives to the *Militant* and the Socialist Workers Party? See page 8 to contact the party branch nearest you, or contact the *Militant* at themilitant@mac.com.

Pathfinder books move at Montreal, Manila book fairs

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Recent book fairs in Montreal and Manila show growing interest among working people in literature addressing key political questions they face as a result of deepening worldwide economic and social crises, growing capitalist competition and war threats, and rising struggles by workers. More are interested in learning about how to build a vanguard communist party that can lead the working class and its allies to power.

Tens of thousands of people thronged the Salon du Livre de Montreal Nov. 25-28. The largest annual book fair in Canada, it showcases French-language authors in all genres of literature, and now includes English-language publishers.

The booth for New York-based Pathfinder Press — which features books by leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and other revolutionary combatants from around the world — attracted considerable interest. It also featured the *Militant* newspaper and was staffed by volunteers from the communist movement in North America from Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver, British Columbia; and Washington, D.C., Albany and New York.

Some 94 books, mainly in French, were purchased, along with 13 introductory *Militant* subscriptions. This was the

most Pathfinder books ever sold there.

Among the best sellers were *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* and *The Turn to Industry: Forging a Proletarian Party*, both by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the SWP, as well as books by leaders of Cuba's socialist revolution.

"Several people made a beeline to get *The Jewish Question: A Marxist Interpretation* by Abram Leon," with 10 copies sold, Marie-Claire David, one of the Pathfinder volunteers at the fair, told the *Militant*.

The French edition of *Thomas Sankara Speaks: The Burkina Faso Revolution 1983-87* was another title in demand, also with 10 sold. This included those bought at the meeting on the book reported on the opposite page.

Manila International Book Fair

The Manila International Book Fair, normally a popular annual mass event, was held "virtually" for the second year in a row Nov. 17-23, as pandemic restrictions there continued. Pathfinder was the only international participant, after having stalls there in 2018 and 2019.

"The Philippines is situated right in the center of the ongoing rivalry between Washington and Beijing," Linda Harris told the *Militant* from Sydney.

"Just as the Manila book fair was opening, tensions flared as Chinese Coast Guard ships fired a water cannon to block two boats taking food to Filipino marines stationed on a disputed shoal in the South China Sea."

Workers and peasants in the Philippines have a long history of popular upsurges, despite government repression. A chief obstacle to the toilers finding the road forward has been both the ultraleftism and the class-collaborationism of the Maoist movement, the main, but declining, variant of Stalinism there.

Harris said this was reflected in purchases of *Maoism vs. Bolshevism: The 1965 Catastrophe in Indonesia* by SWP leader Joseph Hansen and *The Chinese Revolution and Its Development*, which contains SWP reports and articles from 1949 to 1964.

An attractive leaflet designed by supporters of the communist movement was featured on the book fair's website. It was also emailed to over 500 people who had signed up at previous book fairs to receive more information.

A dozen people, as well as the Popular Bookstore in Manila, bought or expressed interest in getting some 43 titles. Many more browsed in preparation for the return of the physical event, hopefully next year.

— New York —

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Moscow threatens sovereignty of Ukraine, sends troops to border

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The recent buildup of Russian forces along the border with Ukraine threatens that country's sovereignty. Moscow seeks to reverse the Ukrainian rulers' moves toward closer relations with imperialist governments in Europe and the U.S. and to advance its long-term goal of dominating Ukraine.

Moscow's moves today are also a response to steps taken by Washington and its NATO alliance to expand its military operations closer to Russia's borders since 1991. Missile defense systems have been set up in Poland and Romania. Washington conducts regular military exercises in those countries.

In 2014 mass protests in Ukraine involving more than a million workers, farmers and others over several months led to the overthrow of the pro-Moscow regime of President Viktor Yanukovych. Thousands camped for weeks in the Maidan — Independence Square — in Kyiv, the capital, inspiring protests across the country and fighting off murderous attacks by riot police.

The ouster of Yanukovych led Moscow to arm and aid pro-Russian separatists to begin a war in the rich industrial Donbas region, in eastern Ukraine's Donetsk and Luhansk provinces and to seize Ukraine's Crimea Peninsula, home to the Crimean Tartar population. Over seven years more than 14,000 Ukrainians have been killed in the conflict and millions displaced.

The Russian government claims it has moved nearly 100,000 troops in response to threats by the Ukrainian army against the Moscow-backed separatist forces in eastern Ukraine.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has threatened both the Ukrainian government and Washington not to allow Kyiv to join the U.S.-led NATO military alliance. The Ukrainian parliament approved a law, Dec. 13, allowing foreign troops to join military drills it is planning next year. Some 11,500 troops from the U.S., U.K., Poland and other countries have said they will join the war games.

In a "Zoom" meeting Dec. 7, President Joseph Biden told Putin that an invasion of Ukraine would be met with sanctions, and an expansion of U.S. troops in NATO member countries elsewhere in Europe. But Biden also made clear the stationing of U.S. troops in Ukraine was "not on the table."

Tensions remain high. Russia's spy agency, the FSB, claimed Dec. 9 that an unarmed Ukrainian naval vessel heading toward the Kerch Strait from the Sea of Azov endangered maritime security. Russian forces threatened to fire on it.

Since its invasion of Crimea, Moscow has in effect exerted control over those waters that lies north of Crimea, between Ukraine and Russia.

The Putin regime seeks to reestablish Russia's influence over what it calls its "near abroad" — states that were formerly part of the Soviet Union, including Ukraine.

In mid-July, Putin issued a lengthy essay "On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians." He insists both are "one people" and asserts Ukraine "was shaped" on "the lands of historical Russia." He claims "true sovereignty of Ukraine is possible only in partnership with Russia."

Putin stands on the legacy of both the czarist empire — which conquered and created a true prison house of nations until it was overthrown by the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution — and the counter-revolutionary regime of Joseph Stalin. Putin has denounced the revolutionary course advanced by Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin of supporting the rights of oppressed nations to self-determination.

Rights of oppressed nations

With the triumph of the Russian Revolution, Ukraine declared independence in 1918. Workers and peasants formed a Soviet Socialist Republic there three years later. Through the 1920s the Ukrainian language and



Map shows Crimean Peninsula, which Putin regime annexed in 2014, and part of eastern Ukraine in Donbas region that Moscow-backed separatists seized, imposing brutal regime.

culture flourished.

"A distinction must necessarily be made between the nationalism of an oppressor nation," wrote Lenin in December 1922, "and that of an oppressed nation, the nationalism of a big nation and that of a small nation." But Stalin challenged this proletarian internationalist course. Three months earlier, Stalin had proposed absorbing the independent republics of Ukraine, Belorussia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia into Russia.

Lenin objected. "We consider ourselves, the Ukrainian SSR, and others equal" and must "enter with them on an equal basis into a new union, a new federation, the Union of the Soviet Repub-

lics of Europe and Asia," he said. The USSR was formed as a voluntary union at the end of that year.

That historic advance was reversed during a counterrevolution against the working class carried out by a privileged bureaucratic caste led by Stalin in the 1920s and '30s. It transformed the USSR into its opposite — an oppressive "Soviet" superstate.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the Ukrainian people once again declared independence. At that time wannabe capitalists among the imploding bureaucracy drove to privatize industry and divvy up the country's wealth among themselves.

Kellogg's strikers say No! to two-tier wages, benefits

Continued from front page

the Creek told the *Militant*. "They're trying to break us. Our demand to end the two-tier setup is serious."

The central issue in the strike is the company's divisive two-tier wage-and-benefit system that allows the company to employ a layer of "transitional" workers who make lower wages, have no pension, and pay much higher health care costs.

The previous contract allowed the company to hire 30% of the workforce as "transitional" employees on the second tier, with a promise of "graduating" them to "legacy" status as older workers retired. But union members say the company has continually refused to move second-tier workers into the higher tier.

The latest contract offer called for eliminating any cap on the number of second-tier workers, alongside a new promise that more could become regular employees down the road, most after the contract would run out. This was overwhelmingly voted down by the union membership Dec. 5.

"The language as far as moving the 'transition' workers to 'legacy' status is vague to say the least," Mike Crumolo from Battle Creek said. He is proud union members voted no and "stuck together."

"In the long run when there are big groups of workers retiring, new hiring would mean more and more workers would be transitional," Local 3G President Trevor Bidelman told the *Militant*. "We have to look down the road to the next couple of contracts and what we will be able to win in them. If we don't take care of the future, the future won't take care of us. There's a long-standing history of regular, full-time employees — not

'legacy' and 'transitional.' This is what we want to get back to."

Dan Osborn, president of Local 50G in Omaha, told The Associated Press that some workers would have to wait as long as nine years to reach the higher "legacy" pay level under the rejected agreement. "Ultimately, we don't want to leave anyone behind. And we want a secure future," he said.

After the vote, Kellogg's bosses threatened to permanently replace all the strikers. In response, the BCTGM International issued a statement saying union members would "not be bullied at the negotiating table and are ready to bargain a fair and just contract that rewards them for their hard work and does not sell out future generations of Kellogg employees."

Bidelman said that the company

is trying to bring in more scabs, and the international union has filed a suit with the National Labor Relations Board to fight it.

Much-needed solidarity continues to pour in for the strikers. The Go-FundMe pages set up for the four locals report raising almost \$360,000. Donations come from individual workers as well as unions and other organizations.

"Every union you can think of has been out walking the picket line with us," Bidelman said. "And every Tuesday and Friday a local caterer called God's Kitchen brings a hot meal to the union hall."

Help build solidarity for the Kellogg's strikers! To find out how you or your organization can support the strike go to the BCTGM website at bctgm.org/activism/solidarity/.

Found not guilty by jury, Rittenhouse still faces attacks on his political rights

BY VIVIAN SAHNER

In a closely followed and widely publicized trial, the facts marshaled there showed that 18-year-old Kyle Rittenhouse was neither a white supremacist nor guilty of any crime when he defended himself from a mob in Kenosha, Wisconsin. The jury voted unanimously he could go free.

None of that prevented radical student groups at Arizona State University from demanding authorities bar him from the campus or studying online. Students marched Dec. 1, chanting "Killer Kyle off our campus" and "Lock him up."

Dismissing the jury's verdict, the ASU's Students for Socialism stated, "Kyle Rittenhouse is still guilty in the eyes of the people." It demanded the

school deny him admission, smearing him as "a violent, blood-thirsty killer" and a "high-profile right-wing fascist icon." The group, along with Students for Justice in Palestine, the Multicultural Solidarity Coalition and MEChA de ASU, sponsored the rally.

But facts matter in any trial. Working people have a right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. We have a right to a trial, by a jury of our peers. These rights were won in blood in revolutionary struggles. It's good that in Rittenhouse's case the facts were heard, including video evidence of the shootings, a jury weighed them and reached its verdict.

But Freshman Zein Hajag told The *Militant* "Continued on page 9

Lenin's Final Fight

Speeches and Writings 1922-23
"I declare war to the death on Great Russian chauvinism."

Lenin's Final Fight
Speeches & Writings 1922-23

"A distinction must be made between the nationalism of an oppressor nation and the nationalism of an oppressed nation, of a big nation and that of a small nation."

— V.I. Lenin, 1922

\$17

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—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Montreal day care workers end strike, gain wage increase

MONTREAL — Over 11,000 public sector day care teachers and support workers, members of the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CSN), ended a 12-day strike Dec. 12, voting up a new contract by 93%. Some 14,000 more workers from the Confederation of Quebec Unions (CSQ) and the Quebec Federation of Labor (FTQ) planned to join the strike Dec. 9, but didn't do so when the agreement was reached.

The strike followed 10 days of targeted strike actions by the three union federations over the past few months.

"It's not a raise, it's catching up," Ouiza Sadeg, a teacher for 15 years, told the *Militant* on the picket line in Montreal Dec. 9. The new contract includes a wage increase of 18% for teachers and from 8% to 12.5% for support workers, who comprise about 15% of day care workers. "We want wage equity across different sectors, like the kitchen staff," explained Hyat Merrad, a 15-year teacher. "Hospital kitchen workers are better paid."

Given the low pay and cutbacks in staffing, the workload has increased on all remaining workers. "Under conditions we currently face, many are leaving work completely exhausted," Ariane Seguin-Leduc, who drove to a Nov. 23 action with fellow strikers from Acton Vale, 55 miles east of Montreal, told this worker-correspondent then. "Cooks, specialized educators, support workers, disinfection workers, administrative staff have been leaving. Without them the child care center is not functional."

Parents have been organizing support actions for the strikers. "I see initiatives by parents in solidarity with striking employees, and I think we should join this movement," Gabrielle Duschesne, a mother affected by the strike, wrote on the Facebook page of the day care center where this writer's baby also goes.

Being a day care teacher is "more about the outcome than the income," Tania Badia told the *Militant* at the rally Nov. 23. "That being said, earning

a wage that shows our work is valued is something we are striving for. The government has undervalued our profession, most of whose members are women, for years."

—Philippe Tessier

Concrete truckers strike has impact on Seattle construction

SEATTLE — Thirty-four concrete truck drivers organized by Teamster Local 174 at Gary Merlin Construction got the ball rolling Nov. 19 when they said "No" to the company's "last, best and final" offer of wages below prevailing construction levels.

Truckers at Stoneway Concrete soon joined them, then concrete mixers at Cadman, CalPortland, Salmon Bay Sand & Gravel, and Lehigh Cement, bringing the total to more than 300 on strike. They're picketing 24/7, impacting construction in King County, one of the hottest construction markets in the country.

In addition to compensation on par for the industry, key issues include forced Saturday work and making healthcare more affordable for union retirees.

The bosses "exploit these workers as much and as long as humanly possible, refusing to give them something that might actually allow them to retire before their bodies are completely destroyed by the work they do," a union statement says. "Driving a dump truck, after all, is very hard on the human body — especially when the truck is empty and every bump in the road starts to feel like a minor car wreck."

"Union trades — painters, glaziers and crane operators — won't cross our pickets," Jamie Fleming, communications director for Local 174, told the *Militant*. "You really want to get the cranes, because then no construction can take place."

"We have been getting support, including burn barrels from the Ironworkers union. Then we put out a call on Facebook for firewood and it has been arriving by the truckload!" she said. "The company has cut off negotiations. The contract was up July 31 and everyone saw this coming."

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

THE MILITANT

SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

December 23, 1996

HAVANA — More than 100,000 Havana residents marched December 2 in celebration of the 40th anniversary of the birth of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba.

A huge cheer went up as the contingent was announced of more than 100 veterans of the Rebel Army of the Sierra Maestra who had routed the Batista army. The contingents after them were the veterans of the Escambray mountains, who had defeated counterrevolutionary bands in the early 1960s, followed by the combatants of Playa Girón, who in less than 72 hours smashed the 1961 U.S.-sponsored invasion of Cuba.

Then came the internationalist fighters representing the over 350,000 Cubans who have served on military missions around the world, many in Angola in answer to the Angolan government's request for aid to defend the country against invasions by the apartheid South African army.

THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED WEEKLY IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

NEW YORK, N.Y. MARCH 25, 1971

December 24, 1971

The Harriet Tubman Book Center and the National Lawyers Guild announced at a press conference Dec. 1 they are filing a suit in federal court against the Los Angeles County Jail. The suit will demand free access to all reading materials, regardless of content or point of view, for the prisoners.

At present, this basic constitutional right is denied to these pretrial prisoners, who are usually held for an indefinite period before trial because they are unable to raise money for bail. The prohibition of all newspapers, magazines, books and other literature except for those approved by the Sheriff's Department is political censorship.

Rella Brown of the Harriet Tubman Prisoners Movement, Darlene Dyer, an ex-prisoner, and Earl Tockman of the National Lawyers Guild hope that the suit calls attention to the forgotten men and women in the nation's prisoners and jails.



Nov. 23 rally in Montreal by public sector day care workers, part of 12-day strike that won new contract. T-shirt reads: "Enough is enough! I will no longer work for peanuts!"

More help is needed, Fleming said. People in the area can join the picket lines, locations are listed on the local's website, Teamsters174.net. Donations, messages of support, and other solidarity can be sent to Teamsters Local 174, 14675 Interurban Ave. South, Ste. 303, Tukwila, WA 98168.

—Rebecca Williamson

Ukraine coal miners sit in over gov't refusal to pay back wages

Members of the Independent Trade Union of Miners of Ukraine stopped work at the Chervonogradskaya mine in the Lviv region Dec. 7 to protest the government's refusal to pay their back wages. The 42 miners on the first shift sat in underground for a day and a half.

After the miners left the mine, they picketed at the international border crossing between Ukraine and Poland at Rava-Ruska, stopping traffic. Other miners protested at the administrative building of the state company in Sokal and outside the City Council in Chervonograd. The workers include both underground miners and processing workers, many of whom are women.

Similar protests demanding unpaid wages by miners and coal truck drivers took place at the Dobropolskaya mine in the Donetsk region in southeastern Ukraine.

"The reason for the two miners' protests are wage arrears," Mykhailo Volynets, chairperson of the union, said. The government only allocated \$1.5 million to pay back wages at the Chervonograd complex, but the amount owed as of Dec. 7 amounts to \$13.9 million. This government disregard for the livelihoods of the miners is an ongoing problem, which has led to a number of protest actions over the past year.

—Brian Williams

Warehouse workers in Australia win contract fights

SYDNEY — Some 1,000 warehouse workers organized by the United Workers Union at seven Toll distribution centers across Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales won a new contract Nov. 17, two days after going out on an indefinite strike. They won a 3% wage increase for each of the next three years, which matches the current official rate of inflation, and agreement for 100 more permanent jobs.

Workers at the Country Road Group warehouse in Melbourne ended their 11-day strike on Nov. 22 after winning agreement for more permanent positions, and a 13.3% wage raise over four years backdated to May when their old contract expired. The 50 workers there only joined the union last year. Many are single mothers earning up to 10 Australian dollars (\$7.10) an hour less than workers at other area warehouses. The strikers had organized protests outside the company's store in Melbourne and at the city's Fashion Week events.

Workers at the Toll warehouses supply Kmart and other stores. They had rejected earlier pay offers that would have left their wages below the rate of inflation. United Workers Union member Narelle Young said that she worked directly for Kmart for AU\$32.65 an hour in 2010, before the company outsourced its warehouse operations to Toll. She and other workers were then "reemployed" at AU\$17 an hour. Over 10 years her pay increased to AU\$27, still way short of what she had been getting from Kmart. Starting pay at Toll warehouses will now be AU\$25, while the minimum wage in Australia is just over AU\$20.

—Bob Aiken

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Working-class course needed

Continued from front page

The road forward in the fight for women's emancipation today is not to mount a defense of *Roe v. Wade*. Nor to try to wrest "a better" court ruling, one that would inevitably continue to block needed discussion and debate in the working class.

Opponents of women's second class status need a fundamentally different starting point. Our fight is an integral part of battles by working people against efforts by the employing class to place the burden of the crisis of *their* system on *our* backs. This is a different approach from, and a correction of, recent *Militant* articles and editorials on the Texas and Mississippi attacks on women's rights.

Fighting for what workers need necessitates rebuilding our unions and bringing together the class forces that can chart a political road to end capitalist rule and exploitation.

That course opens the door to transforming the economic and social conditions in which women and men can make decisions on starting a family. That's the road to ending the oppression and degradation working people face today, where responsibility for the upbringing of children (as well as care for the sick and the elderly) fall on the shoulders of individuals, women above all.

A fight along these lines is the continuity of the revolutionary working-class movement, especially the Marxist leaderships of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia and the Cuban Revolution today (see article on page 7).

Obstacles to starting a family

Prospects for starting a family are becoming harder and harder for millions of young workers. They face falling real wages, mounting debts and soaring costs for housing, health protection and child care, as well as restrictions on the ability of working people to adopt a child.

These barriers to affordable family formation restrict and warp the choices available to women, especially women in the working class and worse-off middle classes, about when or whether to give birth. About how to live their lives. As working people and the labor movement fight to transform these conditions, the battle for women's emancipation advances as well.

Every aspect of workers' lives is dis-

Books workers need to build a party worthy of the name 'revolutionary'



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Ever since Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* ruling cut short debate on abortion, opponents of women's rights have fought to limit access to the procedure. Map shows drastic cut to clinics.

These social conditions are aggravated by laws adopted by state governments nationwide restricting women's access to family planning services, including safe and secure birth control and abortion, including today in Mississippi and Texas.

In fact, the Supreme Court's 1973 decision, cutting short the debate in the working class, put wind in the sails of opponents of women's rights, who launched an ongoing campaign to restrict women's access to abortion. Today

More workers are turning to our unions to fight the bosses' drive to push down wages and worsen conditions. Like millions of others, members of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers union at Nabisco faced management's stretching out of the workweek, ensuring workers had even less time with their families. The successful strike this summer, pushing back forced overtime, helped inspire others to fight. Battles are taking place at Warrior Met Coal, ExxonMobil in Texas, Kellogg's and more.

The cost of child care is out of reach, hitting women especially hard. Since the start of the pandemic, child care costs have spiked nearly 50%.

Many youth looking for a future and a family are forced to live longer and longer with parents, unable to afford setting up their own household. Some 43% of all 18-to-29-year-olds live with their parents.

Government decisions to shut down schools due to COVID forced millions of workers, especially women, to stay home and care for kids. Women's labor force participation plunged during the lockdowns, dealing blows to their fight for equality.

Obstacles to adoption are another way the rulers hamper workers starting families. Prospective parents must show proof of sufficient income, health insurance and that they have no criminal record. They must undergo an up to six-month-long investigation, including surprise visits by prying authorities. Only then is their "suitability" as parents ruled on by a case worker.

Many are so overwhelmed by angst and depression they have renounced bringing a child into the world themselves. "Harnessing the love I have for my unborn hypothetical kid comforts me in sparing them an inhospitable future," one told the *New York Times*. "In this way, my choice feels like an act of love."

As workers know, many children are "adopted" by relatives and friends in face of social calamities. These are acts of elementary human solidarity.

Revolutionary working-class leaders have answered such reactionary views and panic-mongering before.

In 1913 Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin denounced arguments that workers' oppressive conditions mean that bearing children brings only a future of more misery. What about bringing more working-class fighters? Lenin retorted.

"We have begun to learn and are rapidly learning to fight," he wrote.

Our children will "fight better, more unitedly, consciously and resolutely than we are fighting against the present-day conditions of life that are maiming and ruining our generation." And "they will be victorious."

The determination to bring about a revolutionary future, Lenin says, is "why we are unconditionally the enemies" of the reactionary view that "population control" is the solution to capitalism's multiple and accelerating ills.

Such an outlook, Lenin said, is "suited only to unfeeling and egotistic petty-bourgeois couples who whisper in sacred voices: 'God grant we manage somehow by ourselves. So much the better if we have no children.'"

It goes without saying, Lenin added, "This does not by any means prevent us from demanding the unconditional annulment of all laws against abortions or against the distribution of medical literature on contraceptive measures, etc."

Such measures became possible when the Bolsheviks led workers and farmers to power in 1917. Three years later, the Soviet republic became the first government anywhere in the world to abolish such restrictions on elementary rights and health care.

What is needed by the working class and our oppressed and exploited allies today are social struggles led by our unions for jobs at union-scale pay, housing, child care and cost-of-living adjustments in our contracts to protect our wages from inflation.

Through battles for these and other needs of workers, farmers, women, oppressed nationalities, and other exploited producers, the working class can forge our own revolutionary political party — independent of the capitalists, *their* parties and *their* government — to fight to take state power into our own hands. To establish a workers and farmers government and join in the worldwide struggle for socialism.

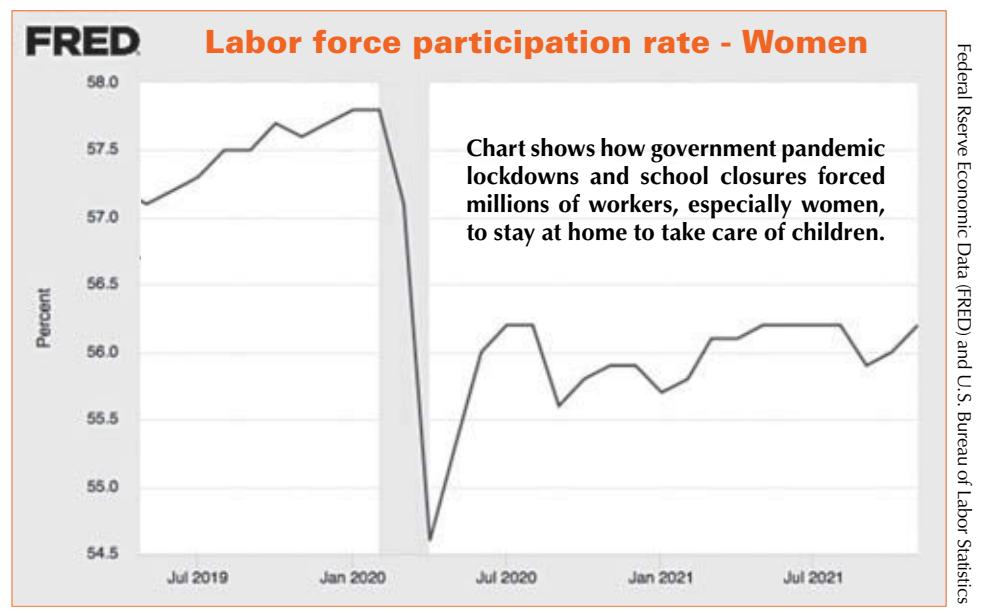
This is the road to the emancipation of women.

Young women were a big part of the 250,000 volunteers who joined the 1961 campaign that eliminated illiteracy by teaching 700,000 people in Cuba to read in just one year. Tens of thousands shared the life of peasant families.

At the urging of Castro, the Federation of Cuban Women in 1960 set up the Ana Betancourt School for Peasant Women, which over the next few years brought 14,000 young women from the most isolated regions of the island into Havana, where they received vocational training, along with classes in reading, history, basic health and hygiene. They were introduced to the theater and ballet, widening their cultural horizons.

They were taught to sew, and given their own sewing machine on one condition — they had to make a dress for their mothers and teach 10 other peasant women how to sew. Returning home more conscious and confident, they won others to the revolution.

The revolution confronted every obstacle to women's participation. Under a 1938 law, abortion in Cuba was allowed only in cases of rape, a threat to a woman's life, or certain birth defects. On top of this, in the first few years of



Cuban Revolution set example in fight for women's emancipation

BY SETH GALINSKY

For those around the world who want to unite working people to advance our class interests and to end the second-class status of women, there is much to learn from the experience of Cuba's socialist revolution. From the very beginning, Fidel Castro led Cuban revolutionaries to advance women's participation as equals in every aspect of society, from combat to industry.

The Rebel Army and the July 26 Movement, which fought to overthrow the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista, incorporated women in both the guerrilla struggle in the mountains and the revolutionary movement in the cities. Numerous women were central to the day-to-day leadership of the battles that brought down the dictatorship.

Well before Batista fled the country on Jan. 1, 1959, the revolutionary movement began organizing working people to implement social measures in their interests in areas the Rebel Army controlled.

A congress of peasants was held in September 1958 and a land reform begun. More than 400 schools were opened offering classes to the general population and the rebel soldiers alike.

Before the revolution, "beginning with the question of work, there were countless activities from which women were banned," Fidel Castro, the central leader of the revolution, noted at the first national congress of the Federation of Cuban Women on Oct. 1, 1962.

Women "wanted to participate in a revolutionary process, whose aim was to transform the lives of those who had been exploited and discriminated against, and create a better society for all," Vilma Espín, a leader of the revolution until her death in 2007, said in 1997.

As women joined in carrying out all aspects of the unfolding socialist revolution, they transformed themselves in the process.

The leadership did every thing it could to eliminate obstacles in the way of women's participation, including expanding access to child care. They carried out bold practical measures and patient educational work to overcome deeply held prejudices.

Young women were a big part of the 250,000 volunteers who joined the 1961 campaign that eliminated illiteracy by teaching 700,000 people in Cuba to read in just one year. Tens of thousands shared the life of peasant families.

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Miners walked out in an effort to force Warrior Met Coal bosses to negotiate seriously with the union, five years after being saddled with a concession contract imposed on them out of the bankruptcy of the former mine owner, Jim Walter Resources. That contract gutted many of the gains in wages and working conditions miners had won.

A handful of Wall Street hedge funds, led by BlackRock, took over and started up Warrior Met. The miners were forced



Above, Bohemia; inset, Federation of Cuban Women

Students at Cuba's Ana Betancourt School in early 1960s learn to measure and cut fabric. Set up by revolutionary government, school gave job training to peasant women for first time. Inset, Vilma Espín, a leader of the revolution, in 1958.

the revolution about half of Cuba's 6,000 doctors — including the majority of gynecologists and obstetricians — left for the United States. The U.S. economic war on Cuba made it difficult to import basic contraception.

In 1965 the Health Ministry, under the urging of the Federation, issued a new interpretation of the 1938 law to permit early term abortions, which like all medical procedures was free of charge. Cuba was the first country in Latin America to decriminalize abortion. By 1979 a new penal code was adopted, and the old law was wiped off the books. Only the woman has to give consent.

The three excerpts below by Espín were printed in *Women in Cuba: The Making a Revolution Within the Revolution*. Copyright © 2012 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

❖

VILMA ESPÍN

We had to change women's mentality — accustomed as they were to playing a secondary role in our society. Our women had endured years of discrimination.

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When the miners went on strike, they set up picket lines at the company's No. 4 and No. 7 mines, the preparation plant, the central shops and railroad crossings.

But, in a serious attack on the strike, the company got Circuit Court Judge James Roberts to issue an order Oct. 27 banning picketing and all union activity within 300 yards of the Brookwood

mines. The company charged the union with violence against scabs. The injunction has been extended several times.

Fight against onerous injunction!

When the miners went on strike, they set up picket lines at the company's No. 4 and No. 7 mines, the preparation plant, the central shops and railroad crossings.

Spread the word about the strike! Send donations to UMWA 2021 Strike Fund at P.O. Box 513, Dumfries, VA 22026, or pay electronically on umwa.org website by clicking "here" and selecting "Donate Now." Send messages of support to District 20, email: umwa-district20@bellsouth.net.

participation in the workforce simply due to conjunctural considerations or because we haven't given priority to solving the most pressing family needs.

To propose that women return to the home would be a significant step backward from all standpoints. First of all, this is absurd. It not only abandons the principle of equality and reinforces women's traditional role; it also erases almost a century and a half of social struggle, since the pioneers of Marxism pointed to the indivisible relation between the liberation of society through socialist revolution and women's liberation as part of the revolutionary movement ...

That's why we've been careful all these years not to propose apparent solutions to women's double burden, such as extending the length of maternity leave, giving mothers subsidies to care for their children, shortening women's work hours, etc. Such steps, instead of reducing inequality, tend to perpetuate it by taking women out of the workforce and slowing their advancement.

"Speech at Meeting of Women from Socialist Countries," Havana, February 1989

Since the earliest years of the revolution, the FMC has confronted serious problems arising from women's lack of knowledge about their own bodies, their reproductive system, their sexual health, and the possibility of planning both the number of children and the time between births.

From the very beginning, we pursued a double goal:

To raise consciousness through political education, so that new tasks could be performed.

To raise the political level through the tasks themselves.

Speech to Second Congress of the FMC, November 1974

For us, equality is not merely a principle of social justice, but a fundamental human right. ... It would be dangerous to start agreeing with the most backward capitalist ideologies on women's

and advanced scientific concepts.

Interview with Norwegian journalist, 1997

Miners: 'We have been on strike for 252 days now'

Continued from front page

porters at the union's Dec. 8 solidarity rally at City Park here. Rallies like this have been held almost every week since the strike against Warrior Met Coal by 1,100 UMWA members began April 1.

Striking miners have formed contingents in several area Christmas parades in recent weeks, spreading the word about their battle and getting solidarity and donations from other unions, including a truckload of Christmas toys, UMWA International District 20 Vice President Larry Spencer told the crowd. Roberts reported on contributions from other unions that help provide weekly strike benefits to the miners, in addition to the UMWA's strike fund.

The people who manage the Wall Street hedge funds that own Warrior Met don't know us, they don't know our families, they don't know our communities. And they don't care," the UMWA says. "All they care about is sucking as much money as they can, every day that they can, from central Alabama."

When the miners went on strike, they set up picket lines at the company's No. 4 and No. 7 mines, the preparation plant, the central shops and railroad crossings.

Solidarity rallies are held each Wednesday at 5 p.m. at the Brookwood ball park, at 15689 Highway 216.

The miners' hard-fought battle against Warrior Met is the first contract strike in the Alabama coalfields since the early 1980s. The striking miners are encouraged by other labor battles that union fighters have waged this year at John Deere, Volvo, Nabisco/Mondelez, Frito-Lay, Kellogg's and other companies.

Socialist revolution will accelerate liberation of art and culture

Art and Revolution: Writings on Literature, Politics, and Culture by Leon Trotsky is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for December. Trotsky was a central leader of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia and the early Communist International. After V.I. Lenin's death, he continued Lenin's fight for proletarian internationalism in the face of a bloody political counterrevolution led by Joseph Stalin. The excerpt is from "Manifesto: Towards a Free Revolutionary Art." Trotsky drafted most of it in Mexico in 1938 in collaboration with Andre Breton, the best-known leader of the Surrealist movement, and Mexican muralist Diego Rivera. Copyright © 1970 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



Museo Casa Estudio Diego Rivera y Frida Kahlo/Manuel Álvarez Bravo

From left, Mexican artist Diego Rivera, Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky and surrealist Andre Breton collaborating on "Manifesto: Towards a Free Revolutionary Art" in Mexico in 1938. It called for freedom from censorship, capitalist or Stalinist alike, and artistic independence.

has become absolutely intolerable.

Insofar as it originates with an individual, insofar as it brings into play subjective talents to create something which brings about an objective enriching of culture, any philosophical, sociological, scientific or artistic discovery seems to be the fruit of a precious *chance*, that is to say, the manifestation, more or less spontaneous, of *necessity*. Such creations cannot be slighted, whether from the standpoint of general knowledge (which interprets the existing world), or of revolutionary knowledge (which, the better to change the world, requires an exact analysis of the laws which govern its movement). Specifically, we cannot remain indifferent to the intellectual conditions under which creative activity takes place, nor should we fail to pay all respect to those particular laws which govern intellectual creation.

In the contemporary world we must recognize the ever more widespread destruction of those conditions under which intellectual creation is possible. From this follows of necessity an increasingly manifest degradation not only of the work of art but also of the specifically "artistic" personality. The regime of Hitler, now that it has rid Germany of all those artists whose work expressed the slightest sympathy for liberty, however superficial, has reduced those who still consent to take up pen or brush to the status of domestic servants of the regime, whose task it is to glorify

it on order, according to the worst possible aesthetic conventions. If reports may be believed, it is the same in the Soviet Union, where Thermidorian reaction is now reaching its climax.

It goes without saying that we do not identify ourselves with the currently fashionable catchword: "Neither fascism nor communism!" a shibboleth which suits the temperament of the philistine, conservative and frightened, clinging to the tattered remnants of the "democratic" past. True art, which is not content to play variations on ready-made models but rather insists on expressing the inner needs of man and of mankind in its time — true art is unable *not* to be revolutionary, *not* to aspire to a complete and radical reconstruction of society. This it must do, were it only to deliver intellectual creation from the chains which bind it, and to allow all mankind to raise itself to those heights which only isolated geniuses have achieved in the past. We recognize that only the social revolution can sweep clean the path for a new culture. If, however, we reject all solidarity with the bureaucracy now in control of the Soviet Union, it is precisely because, in our eyes, it represents, not communism, but its most treacherous and dangerous enemy.

The totalitarian regime of the USSR, working through the so-called cultural organizations it controls in other countries, has spread over the entire world

a deep twilight hostile to every sort of spiritual value. A twilight of filth and blood in which, disguised as intellectuals and artists, those men steep themselves who have made of servility a career, of lying for pay a custom, and of the palliation of crime a source of pleasure. The official art of Stalinism mirrors with a blatancy unexampled in history their efforts to put a good face on their mercenary profession.

The repugnance which this shameful negation of principles of art inspires in the artistic world — a negation which even slave states have never dared to carry so far — should give rise to an active, uncompromising condemnation. The *opposition* of writers and artists is one of the forces which can usefully contribute to the discrediting and overthrow of regimes which are destroying, along with the right of the proletarian to aspire to a better world, every sentiment of nobility and even of human dignity.

The communist revolution is not afraid of art. It realizes that the role of the artist in a decadent capitalist society is determined by the conflict between the individual and various social forms which are hostile to him. This fact alone, insofar as he is conscious of it, makes the artist the natural ally of revolution.

... The need for emancipation felt by the individual spirit has only to follow its natural course to be led to mingle its stream with this primeval necessity — the need for the emancipation of man...

We recognize, of course, that the revolutionary state has the right to defend itself against the counterattack of the bourgeoisie, even when this drapes itself in the flag of science or art. But there is an abyss between these enforced and temporary measures of revolutionary self-defense and the pretension to lay commands on intellectual creation. If, for the better development of the forces of material production, the revolution must build a *socialist* regime with centralized control, to develop intellectual creation an *anarchist* regime of individual liberty should from the first be established. No authority, no dictation, not the least trace of orders from above! Only on a base of friendly cooperation, without constraint from outside, will it be possible for scholars and artists to carry out their tasks, which will be more far-reaching than ever before in history.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

We can say without exaggeration that never has civilization been menaced so seriously as today. The Vandals, with instruments which were barbarous, and so comparatively ineffective, blotted out the culture of antiquity in one corner of Europe. But today we see world civilization, united in its historic destiny, reeling under the blows of reactionary forces armed with the entire arsenal of modern technology. We are by no means thinking only of the world war that draws near. Even in times of "peace" the position of art and science

December
BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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Holiday greetings to all fellow workers behind bars!

Holiday greetings to our readers and all those held behind prison bars! We greet you as fellow workers, members of the only class capable of putting an end to the exploitation and oppression inherent in the capitalist system. All working-class fighters have to assume they will end up in the defendant's chair at some point during their struggles.

When Malcolm X, who spent 6 1/2 years in jail in his youth, was asked if he was trying to wake up Blacks to their exploitation, he said no, to "their humanity, to their own worth and to their heritage."

Eugene V. Debs, rail union leader and lifelong fighter for the working class, ran for president from prison as the Socialist Party candidate in 1920. He was jailed for speaking out against the U.S. capitalist rulers' war drive during the first imperialist world conflict over markets and territory.

"The jailers want to destroy you. They want to break your physical, moral, and mental integrity," wrote René González, one of five Cuban revolutionaries who spent over a decade in U.S. prisons on frame-up charges. A mighty international movement assured all five are now back in Cuba continuing to advance the socialist revolution there.

The *Militant* provides working people — no matter

what side of the prison walls we are on, no matter the sex, or color of our skin — the news and political perspective we need to advance the line of march of the working class, to be the makers of history.

Join in spreading the word about the *Militant* and books by leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and other revolutionary leaders published by Pathfinder Press!

Over the last year we have seen an increase in strikes and other struggles by workers coming together to resist boss and government attacks amid the deepening worldwide capitalist economic and social crisis. This bodes well for building a more powerful working-class movement.

Despite a decline in the numbers during the pandemic in 2020, today there are still more than 1.7 million people in U.S. prisons and jails. This is the highest in the world, perhaps with the exception of China, where accurate figures are hard to verify. African Americans disproportionately find themselves in the clutches of the capitalist "justice" system.

Some 94% of those serving sentences were pressured into taking plea bargains by prosecutors threatening even stiffer sentences. We support the constitutional right to due process, to a jury of

your peers, to be considered innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt for anyone and everyone charged with a crime.

The *Militant* calls for an end to the death penalty and solitary confinement. Those brutal, cruel and inhuman punishments are used not just to send a message to those in prison, but to the entire working class: Stay in your place! This is what is in store for you if you dare to challenge the capitalist class!

We call for freedom for political and class-war prisoners, including Leonard Peltier, a Native American activist framed on murder charges and imprisoned for more than four decades; Ed Poindexter, a former Black Panther, framed up in Omaha, Nebraska, in 1970 and still imprisoned; and Mumia Abu-Jamal, railroaded into jail in Pennsylvania in 1982.

We join the call to free the nearly 8,000 people imprisoned in Myanmar for opposing the military junta that seized power Feb. 1 and the over 900 political prisoners in Belarus who denounced the rigged 2020 elections there.

The *Militant* offers subsidized low-cost or free subscriptions to our readers behind bars, funded by generous contributions to the *Militant* Prisoners Fund. We encourage all our readers to kick in!

Social disaster after tornadoes result of bosses' drive for profits

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grapple with a disdainful government bureaucracy to get any help.

The two most deadly events took place in Mayfield, Kentucky, where a twister leveled the Mayfield Consumer Products candle factory where some 100 people were working, and in Edwardsville, Illinois, where a storm ripped the steel roof off of much of an Amazon warehouse, leaving dozens of workers in a death trap. In both plants bosses knew significant storms were predicted and that they had no protected tornado sanctuary on site, but decided not to send workers home for their safety.

"If you leave, you're more than likely to be fired," McKayla Emery, a worker at the candle factory, heard bosses say to workers there, reported NBC News. The factory had been operating round-the-clock producing candles for the Christmas season.

"It was extremely scary," worker Kyanna Parson-Perez told Weekend TODAY news. "Everything happened so fast. They had us in the area where you go in case there's a storm, and we were all there. Then, the lights got to flickering, and then all of a sudden we felt a gust of — we could feel the wind. Then, my ears kind of started popping, you know, as they would as if you're on a plane."

"And then you did like a little rock, like, this way and this way. And then, boom, everything came down on us. All you heard was screams," she said. She called 911 and then started livestreaming on Facebook. "I went live because I was trying to stay calm, and keep everybody else calm and try to give us as much help as possible."

The company is one of the biggest employers in the area, one of the poorest in the state. Bosses pay workers \$8 an hour, for both straight- and overtime, which makes it hard to hire enough labor. The bosses just made an arrangement to hire prisoners from two area jails.

They cut corners to maximize profits, and were fined by Occupational Safety and Health Administration in 2019 for violations involving electrical protective equipment, maintenance, safeguards, personal protective equipment and inadequate exit routes.

These prisoners joined other workers who rushed to the site to play a key role in rescuing workers they could hear crying out from under the rubble

of the collapsed factory. "I tell you, some of those prisoners were working their tails off to get us out," Parson-Perez said. "You know they could have used that moment to try to run away or anything. They did not. They were there, they were helping us. We were able to get the debris under us to move around and we were able to get out."

"It's hard to believe the factories were open," Ryan Mitchcum, who runs a landscaping business in Mayfield, told the *Washington Post*. "It's just a big metal building. They knew these storms were a threat."

Workers pour out to help

Working people in the region have stepped forward to volunteer for the rescue and cleanup effort and are contributing clothes, food and water for the displaced. Small businesses and churches are providing meals and shelter.

Another deadly tornado made a direct hit on a nursing home with 67 residents in Monette, Arkansas. Workers and residents received no notice it was coming. Nurses on duty grabbed onto residents in their wheelchairs and lay across them, shielding them from flying debris as the building's roof collapsed and the fire-prevention system began spraying water everywhere. "It felt like being on the Titanic while it was sinking," one volunteer working to find survivors told the *Washington Post*.

Other nurses who were off their shift showed up to help, along with workers from the area. They rescued residents and set them up in their wheelchairs around running cars to keep them warm. One man who volunteers pulled from the wreckage didn't make it.

Another tornado hit a 1.1-million-square-foot Amazon warehouse in Edwardsville, Illinois, one of three

the company operates just outside St. Louis, at the 8:30 p.m. shift change, killing a yet-unknown number of workers. Thirty are known to have escaped on their own. Much of the roof and concrete walls were demolished. There was no tornado sanctuary on site. Workers were told to gather in a hallway and then sent to the bathrooms. "They made us shelter in place till we left. It was at least 2 1/2 hours in there," Amazon worker David Kosiak told Reuters.

Billionaire Amazon founder Jeff Bezos — one of the world's richest capitalist bosses — evoked widespread contempt when he posted a photo on social media the morning after the disaster of him welcoming the latest tourist passengers on his New Shepard rocket, which had just landed from a short trip to the edge of space. He greeted the small crew and the space sightseers, but failed to say anything to the media about the disaster in Illinois or the dead workers.

Workers at a number of Amazon facilities around the country have been trying to organize a union to fight against the brutal conditions, schedules and low wages at Amazon. Bezos has fought every one.

"Time and time again Amazon puts its bottom line above the lives of its employees," Stuart Appelbaum, president of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, which is trying to organize workers at Amazon, said after the disaster in a Dec. 11 statement. "This is another outrageous example of the company putting profits over the health and safety of their workers, and we cannot stand for this."

President Joseph Biden declared only one state, Kentucky, a disaster area, offering federal aid to those who can manage to navigate the paperwork and red tape. In Kentucky alone more than 50,000 were without power Dec. 12.

Found not guilty, Rittenhouse still faces attacks

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Associated Press, "I don't think anyone with a prior charge of those sorts would even be able to attend here." This throws our constitutional rights out the window. Rittenhouse, Hajaig claimed, went to Kenosha "to intimidate and hurt people of color or people who are supporting the Black Lives Matter movement."

Yet Rittenhouse has explained he supports Black Lives Matter. He now has 24-hour security. A spokesperson for his family said the "goal is to ensure Kyle's safety as he moves on as an 18-year-old young man in college."

ASU President Michael Crow said Rittenhouse can reapply to take courses and that his application would be processed as any other would be. Rittenhouse with-

drew from the online courses he'd been enrolled in during the trial but said he plans to reapply. He told reporters that he hoped to study nursing or law.

During a podcast interview on conservative network the Blaze, host Sydney Watson congratulated Rittenhouse for the Kenosha shootings.

But they were "nothing to be congratulated about," Rittenhouse replied. "If I could go back, I wish I would never have had to take somebody's life."

He added, with "hindsight being 20/20, probably not the best idea to go down there." He said he intends to destroy the gun he took to Kenosha. Rittenhouse also spoke against attempts by Republican congressmen and conservative commentators to award him and treat him as a hero. "I don't think I did anything heroic," he said. "I just defended myself."

'Militant' Prisoners' Fund

The fund makes it possible to send prisoners reduced rate subscriptions. Send a check or money order payable to the 'Militant' and earmarked "Prisoners' Fund" to 306 W. 37th St., 13th Floor, New York, NY 10018. Or donate online at www.themilitant.com